

396 on his whistle of eagle bone. After the center pole had been set, the outer
346 circle of short posts and stringers was erected and rafters run from these
to the fork in the center pole. In one case the entire lodge was then covered
with cottonwood brush. In another only the walls were filled in with brush,
the roof being left open. A single opening was left on the east side to serve
as a door. Across the west side of the lodge a row of small cedar trees or
cottonwood branches was set up, screening off an alcove into which the
dancers could retire to rest and sleep.

While the lodge was being constructed, hunters were sent out to kill a
[532] three year old buffalo bull. At the dance where the lodge was fully roofed,
the head and fore quarters of this animal were skinned and the skin stuffed
with willow twigs, making a sort of manikin. This was set on top of the
lodge with its head toward the east. In the dance where the open lodge was
used the skin was simply placed in the fork of the center pole. During the
[786] time that the materials were being collected and the lodge erected ordinary
rules of conduct were relaxed and there was a good deal of sexual license,
although this apparently did not apply to close relatives.

796 When the lodge was finished or nearly finished, four or five clowns ap-
522 peared. The number of these performers does not seem to have been fixed
292 and anyone could adopt the rôle who wished. These clowns wore conical
536 helmets of willow twigs with the leaves and bark left on, the lower edges
of the helmets coming down over their shoulders. They carried circular
shields roughly woven of split willows, also with the leaves and bark, and
long swabs or clubs made from willow saplings with the leafy twigs at their
ends woven into a ball. They had large false noses of mud and their whole
bodies, equipment and even their ponies were liberally daubed with mud.
They road into camp at a gallop, chasing the people and dogs, striking any-
one they could catch with their mud soaked swabs, and performing a variety
of amusing antics. Those who were struck could not take offence, but people
who did not want to take part in the fun would run into the lodges, where
the mounted men could not reach them.

796 After the completion of the lodge, and probably after the clown's in-
541 vasion, there was a sham battle. While the finishing touches were being put
to the lodge, some of the men had retired to the neighboring creek bottom
and built a rough enclosure there, "like a rail fence." In this they established
themselves, sometimes having women and children with them. A man
who had served as a scout in actual combat came out from the main camp,
located this "fort," and returned to report the presence of an enemy. All
the warriors in camp then donned their full regalia and went out to attack
it, followed by a crowd of spectators. During the attack each man reenacted